

Dear Chairs Lemar and Haskell, Vice Chairs Cassano and Simms, Ranking Members Carney and Somers, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Brook Smith and I am a resident of New Haven. I'm writing to communicate my strong support for **S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 - Acts Concerning the Connecticut Clean Air Act**. These bills would expand the use of electric vehicles in both the private and public sectors of the Connecticut economy and provide funds to help enforce the federal Clean Air Act. This is particularly important for combating climate change, particularly greenhouse gas emissions, ozone depletion, and smog particulate matter, because the transportation sector has had the highest emissions within the Connecticut economy every year since 1990. The state government has concluded that reducing transportation emissions is critical to meeting our goal of reducing emissions 45% below 2001 levels by 2030.

As of 2018, there were just over 17,000 out of 1.3 million vehicles registered in Connecticut that are electric. Estimates suggest that in order to reach the 2030 goal, that number will have to increase to around 500,000. The current Connecticut Hydrogen and Electric Automobile Purchase Rebate (CHEAPR) program is a good start, but it is underfunded and will not do nearly enough. Both bills include the "federal Clean Air Act fee," a continual payment to register or renew non-electric vehicles to individuals under the age of 65, which incentivizes the purchase of electric vehicles. The money collected from this fee will be used to implement infrastructure that promotes electric vehicle use, as well as contributing to the Clean Air Act account, which also directs money to sustainability initiatives. Thus, the federal Clean Air Act fee incentivizes electric vehicle use in both the consumer and infrastructure spheres. By expanding the funding available to CHEAPR, S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 will help us get on pace to meet that goal of 500,000 electric vehicles in Connecticut, and help us solve the problem of persistent emissions in the transportation sector.

However, as much as we would all like to believe that a \$5 annual fee will incentivize the purchase of a (often more expensive) electric vehicle, it is more likely that this fee will be a source of revenue for the state. It is crucial that this revenue is used in a manner appropriate to its collection—reducing carbon emissions. Currently only 57.5% of the fee revenue is to be used on climate initiatives; H.B. 5381 would direct 100% of funds to environmental concerns. As a young person hoping to improve the world rather than simply survive in it, climate change is one of my highest political concerns; my generation needs all the help—monetary or otherwise—we can get.

In conclusion, I urge you to take these steps to help move Connecticut towards a sustainable economy. The costs of climate change are enormous, from rising sea levels that endanger coastal homes, to loss of natural wonders that future generations will never enjoy, to more frequent freak weather events that can devastate communities. The EPA has reported that temperatures in Connecticut have been rising twice as fast as the rest of the US, which leads to

increased flooding due to more intense rainfall. But if we act now, there is still time. I urge you to favorably vote S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 out of the Transportation Committee to help decarbonize our economy and protect our future.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Brook Smith
New Haven, CT